



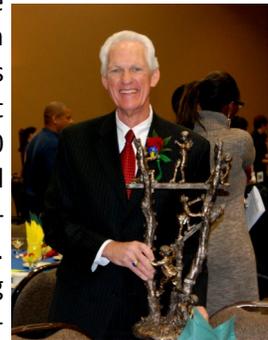
Children's Network (CN)

CN "Shines a Light" on Child Abuse Prevention

Amy Cousineau, Network Officer

The Valencia Room at National Orange Show was filled to capacity Thursday, March 27 for the Children's Network's 16th Annual "Shine a Light" on Child Abuse Awards Breakfast. The annual awards breakfast is a way to "shine a light" on those who are making a difference in the lives of children and youth. More than 15 individuals and organizations were honored for making a difference by giving and going that extra mile for at-risk children in San Bernardino County.

The morning began with the presentation of the Children's Network Lifetime Advocate Award to Ronald J. Powell Ph.D., Administrator of Desert/Mountain Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) in the High Desert. Dr. Powell's engaging and powerful presentation was filled with pictures of different milestones in his life, including how the staff at SELPA has grown to over 300 employees. He spoke about the great work being done by the counselors and clinicians who help the children who have experienced trauma, and the consequences trauma has on the mental and physical health of a person later in life. His presentation style was dynamic with the audience; it was his powerful closing statement that brought the guests to their feet with tears in their eyes. In closing, Dr. Powell told the guests to "Learn continually, have Optimistic bias, Value what matters, lead by Example - for if you keep all of these things in focus, you will have **LOVE** – the most important thing you can have and give to another."



Lifetime Advocate
Ronald Powell poses
with award

The celebration continued as stories of each honoree's commitment and compassion to helping others were told. Children and Family Services Director Randy Schulz and Presiding Juvenile Court Judge, the Honorable Christopher Marshall, were among those who presented honorees with framed certificates.

This year's 'Shine a Light' on Child Abuse honorees were:

- Cardenas Markets, Business
- Tracy McCuskey, Children and Family Services
- Russell Rice, Community-Based Provider, Executive Director of River Stones Residential Treatment
- Michelle Dusick, Department of Behavioral Health
- Terry Westlake, Department of Public Health
- Tara Moe, Education
- Yolanda and Jose Ramirez, Foster Parents
- Mark James, Law Enforcement, San Bernardino County Deputy Sheriff
- Teresa Smith, Legal, Deputy District Attorney

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honorees continued...

- Sandra Wingfield, Legal, Deputy Public Defender
- Dr. Traci Williams, Medical
- Young Visionaries, Organization
- Dan Bautista, Probation
- Kay Wick, Volunteer
- Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) Foster Youth Program at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB)

"The people that we are honoring are people who go about their day to day work because they care deeply about the children and families they are working with," said Network Officer Amy Cousineau. "They are seeking to make a difference in someone's life and we are happy and proud that we are able to honor them."



Mill Center Head Start children proudly sing, "This Little Light of Mine."

the dimly lit room.

In addition to the honorees, 11 students were awarded scholarships from Children's Fund. The scholarship recipients included current and former foster youth who continue to demonstrate their ability to work through the challenges they have encountered. The students beamed as they walked across the stage to receive their certificate and scholarship funds.

A special performance of "Everything is Beautiful" by a few members of the San Bernardino Teen Music Workshop entertained the audience. The awards breakfast concluded with the Mill Center Head Start State Preschool children singing, *This Little Light of Mine*, as they waved their glow sticks in

